

THE
Extreme CRUELTY and DANGER
OF INTRODUCING
NATURAL PLANS
OF SUPPOSED
HAPPINESS,
In Room of the
SCHEME of JESUS:
OR,

*Infidelity, Immorality, Ignorance and final
Misery; the genuine CONSEQUENCES*

Of our present

Pulpit LANGUAGE:

In several

LETTERS to a CLERGYMAN.

By Roderick Mackenzie, A. M.

*Because, that when they knew God, they glorified him not as
God, neither were thankfull, but became vain in their
own Imaginations; and their foolish Heart was darkened,
professing themselves to be wise, they became Fools. Rom.
1st. 21. — If a Son ask Bread — will he give him a
Stone? — or if he ask a Fish will he give him a Serpent?*

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EXTREME CRUELTY AND DANGER

OF INTRODUCING

NATURAL PLANTS

OF SUGAR

HAPPINESS

In Room of the

SCHEME OF JESUS

OF

Infidelity, Immorality, Ignorance and
Error: the genuine consequences

Of our position

PURGE LANGUAGE

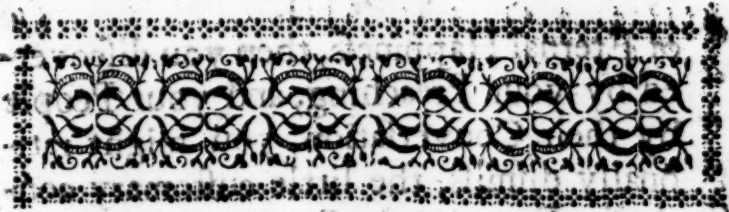
In London

LETTERS TO A GENTLEMAN

By Thomas Arnold, A.M.

I have been thinking much lately of the state of the
country, and of the state of the mind of the people.
I have been thinking of the state of the mind of the
people, and of the state of the country. I have been
thinking of the state of the mind of the people, and
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LETTER I.

Reverend S I R,

I DO not address you in this Manner, because you are singular, in turning the *Cross of Christ* to partial *Foolishness*, a *Block of Stumbling* and a *Rock of Offence*; but, because, some Time ago, I have had an Opportunity to hear your Doctrine from Pulpit, and afterward to have talk'd with some Persons of your stated *Audience*.

To hear you preach, and them approve your sayings, was, in my Opinion, sufficient to make judicious *Heathens*; were they present, to conclude, "That all the peculiar Doctrines of *Jesus*, were the mere Productions of *enthusiastical* Fancy, and that, in the View of yourself, and People, they appeared to be really so: And therefore, shou'd you happen to be in their Countrey, you might soon be prevailed with, to conform to their heathen Establishment: Because if you had no higher Notions of *Jesus*, and his Method

“ of Eternal Happiness, then you discover-
 “ ed by your Preaching, and your People
 “ by their Conversation, you might rati-
 “ onally dismiss, the little customary con-
 “ cluding Form in your Prayers to the supre-
 “ me Being, *for the sake of Christ*: And
 “ pray to the Opt: Max: Jupiter *for the*
 “ *sake of*, some inferior Deity.

“ And if the Religion of Nature, (Mor-
 “ ality) which is the only Method of
 “ Happiness you seem to preach, and your
 “ People to believe, be really saving to
 “ Christians, tho’ the Improvements of
 “ *Jesus* upon it, render the Practice of it
 “ more difficult; it cannot be less saving
 “ to Heathens, to whom the Rules of it
 “ are less known, and therefore, of whom
 “ less is required, and consequently, to
 “ whom it is more practicable in the Ex-
 “ ecution.

“ And if the Religion of Nature directs
 “ Conscience, to accuse Heathens for Crimes
 “ * and Follies committed, which is natu-
 “ ral, or moral Repentance; and if
 “ such Repentance, as you say, is one
 “ Term

* *At Mens sibi conscia Facti,
 Præmetuens adhibet Stimulos terretque Flagellis
 Nec Videt interea qui Terminus esse Malorum
 Possit, nec qui sit Pænarum denique Finis;
 Atque eadem me, aut magis hæc in Morte graverant.*
 —LUCRETIVS.

“ Term of Acceptance with the Supreme
 “ Being, upon an Intimation from *Jesus*,
 “ of *God's* Placability with Christians up-
 “ on it; surely the Supreme, Being, will
 “ much more accept the Repentance of
 “ Heathens, who have not the Encourage-
 “ ment of such Intimation.

And if a bare credit, to the extraordinary
 Occurrences of the Life of *Jesus of Nazar-*
eth, has any natural Connections with, or
 “ Influence upon the Acceptance of the
 “ Christian, the like Faith of Heathens,
 “ to the amazing Passages, of the lives of
 “ inferior Divinities, will produce the same
 “ Effect; and if the naked Assent of Man-
 “ kind, to the one, or to the other, cannot
 “ by any known Rules of Nature add to
 “ the Value of Morality as such; then the
 “ Heathen is, in as good a Condition of
 “ Salvation as the Christian, both having
 “ the like Repentance, the like Faith, the
 “ like Morality, and therefore, the like
 “ Hope of Acceptance; with this general
 “ Advantage on the Side of the Heathen,
 “ that by how much his Knowledge, and
 “ other Opportunities are the less, His
 “ Praise, Merits And Acceptance will be
 “ the more.”

Sir, tho' the Sentiments of yourself, and
 stated Hearers, gave Occasion to introdu-
 cing

ting myself, in the Person of a Heathen; I am confident, cou'd you *try my Heart,* and *search my Reins,* you might find, that I do not proceed on Heathen Maxims in my Address to you; but on *those* revealed by, and recommended to me by HIM, who knew more than you, and I, and all Creatures; to whose Intelligence I yield my Judgement, and on whose sufficiency I intirely fix the Comfort of my Soul in Time, and my Salvation after it.

Were your Soul *in my Souls stead,* to view for a Moment, the seeming Inconsistency, between your Conduct on Earth, and your Expectations in Heaven; you wou'd indulge my Freedom in this Address, and relish my Importunity, or at least judge me a pardonable Friend. Because shou'd the Voice of the *Arch-Angel,* and the *Trump of God* alarm me this Night, with an Intimation of the Terrors of that awful Day, I might speak with greater Zeal, because of my greater Certainty of your Danger, but not with greater Sincerity, than I do in these Papers.

I do not write to you as to one of these elated proud Things, who have already naturalized themselves, and their ignorant Hearers, from the Necessity of all written Revelation; and have therefore, intirely
mora-

moralized themselves, and others, from a Conversation becoming the Gospel; but as to one of those, who seem to yield a cold Assent to a Revelation from Heaven, more, probably, from Education, and common Custom, than from any serious Deliberation, and Choice; and therefore, are disposed, by fearless, inattentive, and self-glorious Ventures, to mimick the gradual Removes of other Fugitives from *Jesus Christ*.

However, as I know not, what particular exalted *Imaginations against the Knowledge, and Obedience of Christ*, may have taken Possession of your Soul, and as all secret Thoughts, with all Methods of coming by them, and all Causes of entertaining them, must be left, to the all-curious revealing Day of *Jesus*, I shall in the general, fix upon your acknowledged Character, of, *Minister of the Gospel*: Though it is my real Opinion, that not Grace, nor common Sense, but the vulgar christian *Idiom*, will justify, my yielding that honourable Character to any, whose Sentiments seem to me, to render the *Gospel*, Tidings of no Value. Yet as you bear, and own the *Name*, permit me to remind you of the *Thing*: And in order to that be pleased to recollect,

That

That if no Sect of Heathens, or any single Person among them, ever did conform in Practice, to as much of the Religion of Nature, or Rules of Morality, as their own *Conscience*, or *that* of their Teachers, directed them to; which, if we believe themselves, no one of them ever did: And if notwithstanding as you seem to think, *Remorse of Conscience*, *Repentance*, *Faith*, in the Existence, Providence and Indulgence of a supreme Being, with the Virtue, and Merit of their Conformity, to some of the known Laws of Nature, (Morality) did secure a Place of future Happiness for them; then surely, the like *Repentance*, *Faith*, and *Obedience*, wou'd secure our Felicity, though *Jesus Christ* had never come to our World. This is evident.

That, if *Jesus* came with no other view, than to republish to us, that Religion in a fairer Character, by which the Heathens were saved in a coarser, and more illegible one, he cou'd mean no more, than to gratify our Fancy, not to mend our eternal State. Further,

If he came with no other Design, than to improve the Religion of Nature, and that the Meaning of such Improvement, is, an Addition of moral Rules, unknown before, a Discovery of the extensive Nature
of

of that Religion, and the constant Application of the Powers of our Souls, and Bodies, to the Practice of all; *that is worse*: Because, by the Religion of Nature, it is not according to what we neither know, nor have in Possession, but to what we know, and have, that we are to be judged by the supreme Being; consequently if we act not in proportion to our Knowledge, and other superior Advantages, as none of us ever naturally did; it plainly follows, that in Stead of adoring *God*, for the Mission of that extraordinary Person *Jesus of Nazareth*, we shou'd cordially wish, he had never appeared on Earth.

And, if such Improvement by *Jesus*, casts a poor Aspect upon our eternal State; and if besides, *Repentance* in its full Extent, and improved Circumstances, with a real Faith, to the Nature, Transactions, and Declarations of *Jesus*, are required of us, as indispensable Conditions of future Happiness; and, that we know by repeated Experience, neither of these Conditions to be naturally in our Power, to perform at Pleasure: Then, it undeniably follows, that by a very modest Computation, not one Christian to a thousand Heathens, can be happy hereafter; And therefore, that not only the peculiar Doctrines of *Jesus*, but all his Im-

B provements

provements upon the Religion of Nature, should with all possible Precaution, be kept hid from the Knowledge of rational Creatures; least such Knowledge, shou'd put a Check at once, upon their Innocent Freedom in Time, and enhance their Misery after it. Vith that View, be pleased to consider that,

If there is a Method of Salvation laid down in the Gospel, distinct from all the Schems of Vulgur *Jews, Mahometants, and Heathens*; and if that Method is really peculiar to *Jesus of Nazareth*; and if it is the only *one* known to us from the *Gospel*, effectual for present, and future Happiness; being warranted to declare, that there is *no other Name* (Method) *given under Heaven among Men*, by which they can be *saved*, but by the *Name*, (Method) of *Jesus*, and had there been a Law given, either Natural, Moral, Ceremonial, or Political, which cou'd by all our Conformity to it, have *given Righteousness* (Acceptance with God) *verily Christ died in vain*: And if However, *Christ died not in vain*; and that yourself bears the Character of his Minister, or delegated Publisher, of the Importance of his Sufferings, and Death, Then.

Supposing

Supposing I should whisper in your Ear,
 when you apprehended no Danger; " Pray,
 " let the Scheme of *Jesus* drop. It is a re-
 " stricted unsocial and Mysterious one,
 " conceal it from rational Natures, who
 " will surely disbelieve your unnatural
 " Report, and despise you for the *foolish-*
 " *ness of preaching it*; In the mean Time,
 " as you happen to live in a Countrey,
 " where the peculiarities of *Jesus*, are es-
 " tablished by Law, and said to be the
 " Faith of the Society; it is quite neces-
 " sary, you should assign some natural Use-
 " fullness, to a Person so very much re-
 " garded by your Friends.

" Therefore choose, out of the Plan of
 " *Jesus*, such Rules of Morality, as you
 " may rationally call, an Improvement of
 " the Religion of Nature, and add to those
 " (Occasionally) of the various Systems of
 " Nature, as many Rules, as seem to carry
 " a plausible Reference to such Improve-
 " ment: There is no Danger, in doing the
 " Honour to *Jesus*, of being the Author of a
 " curious Collection of natural Maxims,
 " and moral Rules. Then, you shall find
 " yourself possessed, of an universally be-
 " nevolent, rational Religion, having all
 " Mankind without Distinction, as one
 " *great Object* of your extensive Charity.

‘ This Scheme you shall find, to be at-
 ‘ tended with great Advantages, It will
 ‘ give a generous Loofe to your Mind, to
 ‘ run abroad to the pleasant Fields of Na-
 ‘ ture, and pick up religious Ideas wher-
 ‘ ever you can find them. It will make
 ‘ you put a just Value upon the Powers of
 ‘ your Nature, yea upon the human Na-
 ‘ ture in general. It will make you look
 ‘ with a mixture of Pleasure, and generous
 ‘ Pity upon the Captivity of your gos-
 ‘ pelized Bretheren. It will provide you
 ‘ with a Stock of pleasing Ideas, all of
 ‘ them, so fufceptible of Meanings, that
 ‘ as occasion requires, you may call them
 ‘ *Law, Gospel, Nature, Grace, Divi-*
 ‘ *nity, Humanity, Fitnefs, common, or*
 ‘ *moral, Sense*, and ftill have the Pleasure,
 ‘ of referving your real Sentiments in your
 ‘ own Breaft. Befides, your pleasing Ideas
 ‘ will in proportion to their Novelty, fur-
 ‘ nish you with agreeable Language; and
 ‘ both will recommend you to the No-
 ‘ tice of the curious, free thinking Part of
 ‘ Mankind. In a Word, it will untie your
 ‘ Obligation to the plan of *Jesus*; and the
 ‘ Doctrines, and Example of your enthusiaf-
 ‘ tical Fathers.

‘ And if you happen to have a concealed
 ‘ Regard to at leaft fome of the fpecula-
 ‘ tive

' tive Doctrines of the Gospel; by a gra-
 ' dual Disuse you shall gradually dispise
 ' them, and proportionally dispise the
 ' Author and Promotters of them, and
 ' then infallibly you'l find yourself indis-
 ' posed to practicing the Improvements
 ' made by *Jesus*, upon the Religion of
 ' Nature: Because, there is no Law in
 ' Nature, oblidging a Man to conform,
 ' to the Precepts of a Person whose Vera-
 ' city he suspects, if he is not compelled
 ' thereto by Force or self Love, nor to
 ' more Rules of Practice, than are really
 ' necessary; where less are sufficient; more
 ' are unntaural.'

Now Sir, supposing you believed my
 Scheme, generous and good, and yielded
 to comply with it, by such Ways and
 Means, as were consistent with your own
 Character, and Inrereft, and other Circum-
 stances, in a Christian Country; what more
 rational Method could you choose, to
 Answer my utmost Views. Than when in
 Pulpit, to speak as little of *Jesus*, and his
 peculiar Doctrines, as was circumstantially
 possible; and when in Company, either,
 to speak not of them at all, or if you
 did, to put a Sence upon them, intirely
 consistent with my Scheme, or at least en-
 deavour so to do; and then, leave your
 Friends

Friends with a seeming Impression, that the System of *Jesus*, is not the only way of Acceptance with Heaven; and then, on some proper Occasions, take all the Spiritualities of *Jesus*, and his *Apostles*, and throw them at once, unto that capacious Word ENTHUSIASIM, and jocularly play off, some hard Speeches, against the Evils with which it is replete. I know that you daily prosecute the above Method, I believe you do it, more, from an unfixed, unheeded, Disposition in your Mind, than to Answer the heathen Scheme, I have proposed. However tho' you mean not to find out mine, as valuable to Christians, Mine will find out yours, as valuable to Heathens, and therefore to the grand Enemy of Souls. Because, it is quite natural for the Mind of Man, upon the Disuse of one religious System, to find out another in its Room; and if there is no Check upon it, by a constant Force of united Fear and Love, it will as naturally find out *that* Plan, which bids fairest for the Gratification of its Liberty, and Appetite; and this it will do, by a successive Revolution of different Inclinations, without any known premeditated Design: And if there is an evil Spirit, or Spirits who may have a project in view, bearing a pernicious

icious Aspect on your final Comfort, and who may have occasional Access to your Mind, and may there, form some Images tending to promote their own grand Design; And can do this, without the immediate perception of your slumbering Powers: Then it will follow, that the Scheme which (next to that of refusing the Existence of a supreme Being) is the most opposite to *that* of *Jesus of Nazareth*, your Mind will ultimately fix upon, this I purpose to prove afterwards.

Meantime, as you seem to yield the Existence, and Immortality of Spirits, good, and evil; and to acknowledge the Scriptures, where the Being, Existence, Nature, and Views of the Devil, are strongly ascerted; and to find in Experience, your own Imagination, to be passive of true, and false Appearances; and that your allowed Character, proclaims the Method of *Jesus* to be the best. Therefore it is entirely rational, you would admit, that concealing from Men, the restricted way of Happiness pointed out by *Christ*, and leading them back, by gradual, and insensible Removes, to the desperately unconfined Fields of Nature; without any Hold, or Hope of Happiness, but what arises from a flattering *Idea* of the general Goodness,
and

and unpromised Favours of an indulgent Being; and forming on their Imaginations, wild, and passing Visions connecting the Indulgence of Heaven, with indulging their own Flesh, and Freedom: Surely is, a cruel, ungenerous and evil Conduct, and as such, must be allowed to proceed from some evil Byass in your Mind. And tho' you may discharge Satan, of all Concern in it; because his Operations may not be perceptible to you, being not an *Apostle*, to be acquainted with *his Wiles*; yet still, there must necessarily be some Evil, whence the above evil Conduct proceeds.

Should you notwithstanding, in the general, without the Inconveniency of much Reflection, and for Reasons, arising from hidden Evil, or conceited Goodness, maintain the Purity of your Heart, and the Goodness of your Designs, and the Tendency of your Ministrations to make Men Wise, virtuous, and happy. Then, how has it happened that the Congregation who stately, and with Contentment, sat under your Ministry, these many Years past, seem neither to have or know, any other Confidence towards God, or Hope of future Peace, than, what arises from their Morality; which Morality, they restrict, or enlarge, as best suits their temporal Happiness.

pinefs. Nature in general, is the unknown Rule of their Faith, and Nature in particular, or their own natural Appetites, is the known Rule of their Practice.

Surely, if you faithfully preached to them, *these* Doctrines of *Jesus*, and his *Apostles*, that have their only Spring in the uncreated Nature of *God*, distinct from *those* that have their Rise from the created Nature of Man: *These*, as the Gospel, or glad Tidings, to which their Faith is required, and *those* as the justifying Proofs of their Faith in the other; and neither *these* to be savingly believed, nor *those* to be acceptably performed, but by the application of the *one*, and the production of the *other*, by the *Holy Ghost*: Then, it is very evident, your People would either believe you, or leave you, or not understand you.

That if you preach the Gospel, your People do not believe you, is a plain Fact; because, what have been owned, by Christians, as Tidings of Salvation, absolutely distinct, from all Intimations of Nature, are shocking to the Ears, and ruffling to the Passions, of the fashionable Part of your Auditory; and the lower Part of them, seem not to have heard, and much less to have believed, the absolute

C

Necessity

Necessity of a *Saviour*, and *Holy Ghost*, and far less, to have respect to the tenth Part of the moral Precepts of *Jesus*: Yet, all of them, are so far from leaving you, that they applaud your Lucubrations, as the Quintessence of Reason, and yourself, as a Person, calculated for the Freedom and Happiness of Society; and one stript of all Slavish Attachment, to the cloudy, musty Divinity, and unsocial Practice of former Ages: Therefore, if you preach the *Gospel*, your Hearers, have got the Art of learning the Reverse from you. But,

Perhaps, they don't understand you. It is possible, tho' not very probable, that a Congregation shou'd be sagacious, and intelligent in their Secular Matters, for six Days, and on the seventh, leave their common Sense, with their common Cloaths at Home. Be this as it will: the Possibility of such Event, must proceed from the extraordinary, but occasional Stupidity of your Flock, which you will by no Means admit; Or else, from some culpable, tho' beloved Matter, Manner, and Expression of your own. For,

First, shou'd you really believe the System of *Jesus*, to be peculiar to himself, and truly distinct from every poor, ineffectual Scheme of Nature; yet preach it
not

not as such, to those, you are commanded to instruct. Or,

Secondly, from certain Views, delicately touching your own Fancy, publish it under such adopted Words, and Forms of Speech, as are apt to convey an Apprehension, that it is only a Plan of Nature refined, and made more salvatory. Or,

Thirdly, preach the moral, preceptive Part of the Revelation of *God*, for the glad Tidings of Salvation. Or,

Fourthly, from Design, or Inadvertency, intimate the Record that Nature (without Revelation) gives of *God*, and of its self, in Preference to, or equal with, the Record *God* gives of himself, and of *it* in his Revelation.

Fifthly, shou'd you fall under one, or all the above Mistakes, thro' Ignorance of the *first Principles of the Oracles of God*; then I shall endeavour by, and by, to show, that the Ignorance, and Immorality of your People must naturally follow. In the mean Time, permit me to attend to your own dangerous Case. For,

First, if your Conscience bears you Witness, that you believe the System of *Jesus*, to be distinct from, and independent on, all the Plans that Nature ever did or can afford; and preach it not as such, then;

then, whatever your fond Views may be, can you rationally think, that the Wisdom of Heaven, will not permit you, to perish in your own Prudence? Don't you exalt yourself, above the Orders of Heaven, to *preach the Gospel to all the World, shun not to declare the whole Council of God, determine to know nothing among Men,* as influential on their future Peace, *save Jesus Christ and him crucified,* and to *Glory in the Cross of Christ*; and all this with the awful Sanction, big with future Terrors, *Woe is you, if you preach not the Gospel?* Can you deliberately think, and not be afraid, *if you have received the Truth not in the Love of it,* and therefore, do not declare, or *obey it*; that *God, who is no Respector of Persons,* will not deal by you, as he has done by others of your Character; that is, give you up, to *strong Delusions,* with a double View (the reverse of your own,) first to *believe a lye,* and next to *be d——d?* Which doom, I sincerely pray may be prevented, by that glorious *Grace,* which you seem to *trample under Foot,* if not, I as sincerely prophesie, you shall desperately tremble, at the approaching Conference, between you and the *Shepherd of Israel.*

Secondly, If you preach the known
Matter

Matter of the Gospel, under adopted Words and Forms of Speech foreign to the Phrase of Heaven; then, however agreeable to your own fancy, such new Dress to antient Ideas from *God*, may possibly be; and however famous the inventors; can you rationally affirm, that it will suit the Matter better than the old inspired one? Especially, seeing the Matter is but *in part* known to you, *in part* to the *Apostles*, and but *in part* to Angels, who daily *pry into it*: I am confident, were these glorious Creatures, our audible, and visible Instructors on Earth, they durst not disuse any one of the Phrases, of the everlasting *Gospel*; much less substitute in their Room, any new, and equivocal ones, drawn from the Nature, fitnesses, and Moral sense of eternal or not eternal. Things. You'll say, Words are voluntary. Yes; evil Words, and evil Matter also; I am sorry for it; Sin hath made them both so: but if good Words and good Matter likewise, are voluntary to Men, as you seem to think they are; it is great Pity they shou'd not be voluntary to *God* too.

As he has with infinite Wisdom, and Freedom, chose his good Matter, why not with infinite Knowledge, choose from the infinite Variety of created Sounds, such

as pleased him to communicate his Matter by? Is not this possible? And seeing, *Moses*, the prophets, and the *Apostles*, were organized Beings, can you think it rational, that they received naked Thought, under no Form suited to the Union of their Souls, and Bodys? especially, when one of them, *being caught up to Heaven, heard Words*, that is, received Thoughts, under some Representation, of what we call Words. Or, do you think it probable, that *God* committed his inspired Matter, to be inspired by Men, with proper Manner, and Expression; especially, when these great and holy Men, were not very learned, in the modern moral sense, or eternally independent fitness, and unfitness of Sounds or other Things?

Is it not Fact, that *God* addressed himself, *now*, to their Ears, by audible Speeches; *then*, to their Eyes, by visible Characters; *next*, to their eased Powers in the Night, by sensible Images, and Figures. And can you think, that they forgot Words, Characters, Images, and Figures, and only remembered, the bare stript Matter, without any Form, Manner, or expression; though of the utmost Consequence, to communicate the Ideas of a pure Spirit, to embodied Souls? Sure, tho' in this important

tant Case, you cou'd imagine the wise *God* to be deficient ; you cannot judge his Penmen, to be shorter of Memory than yourself, who can remember in the Morning, the Matter, Manner, and Expression of your Vision in the Night.

If therefore, the Word, the Phrase, the Manner, and Matter of Revelation, are the Produce of the Wisdom of Heaven : How dare you stand in the Room of *Christ*, under the hearing Ear of *God*, to play off your wandering Forms of Speech, conceited Excellency of Words, and fancifully elegant Modes of Expression, and not be afraid, that your new, and fashionable Idioms, may find out new, and pleasing Objects ; and such Objects find out a new and more agreeable Way to Heaven ; and such Way find out, the old Road to Hell ? Where are you then ? You'll say, it was best to be less Wise, at least as Wise, not Wiser than *God*. Tho' Words are but voluntary, and Wind ; *Will* may venture, and *Wind* may blind not only yourself, but Hearers also ; and both fall into the Ditch.

There was a Shepherd in my Country, who upon an Evening, sent his Boy to call home his Sheep, by the Country Cry, D A T T, D A T T. The Boy went, but tired with the common Sound, and
thinking

thinking to make himself Author of a better, cryed H O, H O. The harmless Creatures, unused to the new invented Sound run away in great Terror, excepting the Ram, who stood his Ground, and with an Angry Countenance, pranc'd up to the Young Shepherd, and pushed him to the Ground; then run home, as if he had a Mind to complain. The Boy recovered himself, and got home also; but upon being obliged to tell the Cause of his Disappointment, was heartily lick'd, and dismissed from his Service. I wish the simple Story, may not become too applicable if you don't Speak Shepherd Language.

For, if the Flocks in *Israel* are scattered, it is because the *Shepherds* of *Israel*, have *daub'd them with Morter untempered* in, and unrequired of Heaven. Can there be in Nature, and much less in Grace, any Reason sufficient, to prevail with, a rational Messenger, from the *King of Nations*, to convey, the eternally important Will of his Master, in some unknown, some unmeaning, some uncertain, Sounds, as if on Purpose prepared to musically divert the understanding of the wise, pervert, or over reach the Judgment of the Simple; tho' he knows his Lord *incom- passeth all his steps, knows all his Ways,* and

and not one *Word* in his *Mouth*, but so, he knoweth altogether: And though, he not only sees the Matter of his *Embassy*, laid down to him, but the Form of sound Words, under which he is to deliver it to Men: And discharged, under Pain of the highest Curse to add to, or diminish from either: And that all the Reward he can claim for acting otherwise, is only the Epilogues of the dying Wicked, or the Gratification of a vicious, dying Pallate?

If by all rational Religion, you can find rational Apologies, to justify such Conduct, to a disobeyed God; it is high Time to begin adjusting them to revealed Rectitude; because you shall soon be recalled from you Embassy.

But notwithstanding you may, with a fearless Indifferency, at this Distance from your Change, dispise all that can be said to you upon this Head: And for Reasons wantonly suggested from Humour, Profit, Pleasure, and Attachment, pronounce your *Reprovers*, *Officious*, and *unwise*. Yet durst I anticipate the Charge against you, and put my own soul in place of yours; I assure you, the distant Views, of the Frowns of *God*, wou'd make me fill up the Residue of my Days, with mild, and soft Reflection: least *God*, in whose Name

D

I spoke

I spoke on Earth, shou'd *then* tell me in a loud and awfull *Voice*, what he now tells me, in a *Small* and *Still* one.

‘ That the *Lord Jesus* presumed not to
 ‘ say to Men, but what he *heard and*
 ‘ *learned of the Father*; and much less
 ‘ durst *Prophets*, and *Apostles*, but what
 ‘ they heard and learned of the *Spirit*:
 ‘ That they both received, and delivered
 ‘ their Message, in the simplest Language
 ‘ of Servants, Herdsmen, Craftsmen, Hus-
 ‘ bandmen, and Children; that the most
 ‘ Learned of them, *declared not the Testi-*
 ‘ *mony of God, in Excellency of Speech*
 ‘ *nor in the inticing Words of Man's Wis-*
 ‘ *dom*; nor darkened the Council of Hea-
 ‘ ven, *by Words without Knowledge.*
 And shou'd I plead my Ignorance, as the
 cause of my conceited Wisdom, Then,
 ‘ seeing I had the Word of God for my
 ‘ Light, his Spirit for my Guide, his Saints
 ‘ for my Example, his Throne for my Re-
 ‘ quests, and Conscience for my Notice;
 ‘ and still a Man *of no understanding*;
 ‘ *therefore the God, that made me, shou'd*
 ‘ *shew me no Favour, and be that formed*
 ‘ *shou'd shew me no Mercy.*

Shou'd I say, that I copied after Men,
 esteemed to be learned, and Wise; Then
 ‘ that his own supposed *Foolishness*, in the
 ‘ Matter,

‘ Matter, Manner, and Expression of his
 ‘ Revelation, is Wiser than the Wisdom of
 ‘ Men, of myself, and of all those, whose
 ‘ Thoughts and Language, I had unhappily
 ‘ adopted.’

Should I plead, my natural Desire of
 Applause, Profit, and Pleasure, as Occasi-
 ons of my Error: Then, ‘ that I have had
 ‘ my Reward on Earth; or industriously
 ‘ sought it there: And therefore cannot
 ‘ expect it in Heaven.” Shou’d I say that
 my Disuse of the Diction, or Phrase of
 Heaven, proceeded from the general Dis-
 regard of the Age I lived in, to *Jesus*
Christ, the *now* revealed Line of Life,
 that ran through the whole Scripture;
 that I had no means to know better, or if
 I had, Singularly would have ruined me:
 Then, ‘ that I must, with them, submit to
 ‘ the revealed Sentence, *if any Man love*
 ‘ *not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be*
 ‘ *Anathema, Maranatha, accursed, the*
Lord cometh.

Sir, if nothing can change your faulty
 Dialect, and natural Speculations, to the
 simple Language, and Notions of Heaven
 ‘till the Inspirations of Death to the con-
 trary; I would by no means, exchange my
 Soul, for yours, But.

Thirdly, shou’d not the final Charge
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against you, proceed upon a fanciful Choice of Pulpit Phrases, raw Novelties to the *Idiom* of Heaven; It may upon another pleasing Error, that is, an almost perpetual retailing, and urging for Acceptance with *God*, the moral, and preceptive part of the Gospel Dispensation, for the Gospel itself.

You Acknowledge, that the ritual, and ceremonial Part of the Worship of the Antients, had no moral, or natural Connection with the final Happiness of the Worshipers; but were solemn Umbrages of some *Things that had*: What cou'd these Things be? not Morality, because, itself, of itself, is but an Umbrage, or practical Representation, of inward Nature, or natural Conscience: it cou'd not be natural Religion, because, those bloody, wastefull and tiresome Ceremonies, were the Reverse of all the Dictates, and Voice of Nature, or natural Conscience: Therefore those Rites, &c. must have represented some good THINGS, to come, which Men had not in possession of their Nature; THINGS hid from Ages and Generations, till revealed by *Christ*, and his *Apostles*; Consequently, THINGS, that for their *being*, and *Success*, have no Dependence known to us, upon any created Nature,

Nature, and much less, upon our own vitiated, and ignorant one,

If notwithstanding, you change Morality (the Appointed Umbrage, or shadow of our inward Faith in those glad, and revealed Tidings;) to the Gospel itself, or to the Substance of our Acceptance with God: You are supposed to do so, on one of the following Accounts, or by Turns upon all of them.

Either because Obedience to the Dictates of Nature, is more practicable to Men *now*, than before the publication of the *Gospel*: This cannot happen, for three unanswerable Reasons: because of the great Extent of our Lords Requirments, the perpetual Exercise of all the Powers of our Souls, and Bodys in their full Extent, at all Times, to the End of Life; without offending *in one Point*, otherwise we offend *in all*. And,

Because of the many additional Rules of Morality, with their numberless enjoined Circumstances, unknown to Ancient Morality, which our Lord left to his Followers; assuring them, that if their *Righteousness* did *not exceed* that of the *Pharises* (the strictest Moralists then in the World) they could *not enter into his Kingdom*. And Because notwithstanding such intense Perpetuity

petuity of Practice, and Addition of Rules; Men have not *now* from Nature, the least Degree of more Strength, or Willingness, to Obey, than others had of old. Therefore it is impossible, Morality can bring Life, and Immortality to your People, by representing it easy to them.

Or, because God connected future Happiness to sincere, not perfect Obedience, as a Gospel Covenant. There is not one Word of such Covenant, in all the Book of *God*; nor the remotest Hint concerning it. What? do you recommend to your People, as a Covenant of Happiness, the whole of Morality, in full Sincerity? No: That is a Perfection which is not required. Are they to do the half, in full sincerity? No: because, *God* never indulged Man to omit one known duty, and much less the half of all: Such omission, argues Insincerity, and *that* Argues the Covenant to be Void, and Null. Are they to do as much as Time, Strength, and Circumstances will admit of; with as much Sincerity as, nature can command? No! Because, neither they, nor others, ever did, or shall do so.

May they not therefore, choose for Instance, twenty Duties of Morality, suiting their Humour, and Conveniency and do them

them in Sincerity? Yes: Because, there is no Perfection of Numbers required in the Covenant. May not they omit as many Circumstances of such twenty, as they judge convenient? Yes: Because, perfection of Parts is not required. And if free will directs them, may not they choose two Duties from the twenty, and omit the rest? Yes: Because, if they are not confined by *God* to the whole, they are not limited to any Number; and if they perform the two with Sincerity, why not as acceptable, as Sincerity in two Hundred? And may they not in such two, sometimes, abate of their Sincerity towards *God*, and be sincere towards Men, and next, abate of *it* towards Men, and be sincere towards themselves? Yes,

Because, *God* expects no more Perfection of their Sincerity, than he does of their Love, which, when perfect, is the *fulfilling of the whole Law*, (Morality) but that is not required. May not they perform such two Duties, or one of them, at any Period of Life, suits their Fancy best? Yes: Because, in all the Covenant, there is no Time limited, or any perfection of Time required. May not they hence, conclude, that if they have any Intervals of right Reason, in their expiring Moments

ments, they will be sincere in that one great Duty of Prayer, *God be mercifull to our Souls?* Yes? Because, they shall be happy in that Case, for any Thing appears from this Covenant to the contrary.

Sir, you may easily observe, from this same Wild, unscriptural Chymera, *sincere not perfect Obedience*, so many pitiable Thousands of your poor perishing Brethren, with dying Confusion, and Ignorance, Stare a dark unknown and gloomy Eternity, with the desperate Conclusion in Fact, which I have drawn in word; seeming all their Life over to make no perfect Obedience, (no Obedience at all) *a Covenant with Hell, and an Agree-with Death:*

Can you imagine, that our Lord came into the World, to covenant an Indulgence with Men, to perform as much of the Law of God, and as little, after some Method, right or wrong, with some view, good or bad, at some Time, late or early as they thought convenient; and at the End of Life, qualifie, the Omission, and fearless Transgression of Nature and Grace, with a *Lord have Mercy upon us?*

If not, can you think, that the blasphemous Reproach cast on the Son of God, by the Lives and Death of your People, occasioned

occasional ~~by~~ this Error, improved by Nature to their Destruction, is not recorded in Heaven against you; and that tho' they die, God will not *require their Blood at your Hands?* Tho' some Men, whose *Desire* of present Interest and Ease, and future Freedom from Punishment, has disturbed the cool, and sober Reflections of their Souls, may have invented such favourable Covenant of Life, for themselves, and others of their Disposition; Yet surely the Difference between the Religion of Grace and Nature, is not so very infinite, as to permit a Compact of Peace, between God and Man, at the Expence of all Grace and good Sense. Or,

Because their own good Endeavours, added to their Faith and Repentance, will secure their Happiness. Cautious Christians are always to presume, that new Modes, of Expression, added to inspired Language, carry the Savour of Death along with them. Can you mean, by their good Endeavours, any thing above their good Morality or by their Morality, any Thing more than their Sincere, not perfect Obedience; and by their Faith. trusting to have future Happiness for such Obedience. And what is this, but in other

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words

words the destructive which mentioned before?

If you mean **the Faith of Christ's Satisfaction for Original Sin, and their good Endeavours to atone for their Actual ones, and Repentance to supply all Deficiencies;** this is worse; for if Christ suffered so much, and so long, to satisfy Heaven for one Sin in which he was not personally engaged; O how much, and how long, must they Suffer, to Satisfy Justice, for ten thousand Sins personally their own: tho' a poor Repentance should now and then come in to their Aid.

That devouring Sink of Ruin the Church of Rome, is of your Opinion on this Head, but is better provided: they have contrived an incredible Number of corporal Punishments, to help out the good Endeavours, Faith and Repentance of their people; to which is added an unbloody Sacrifice every Day; and to the Endeavours &c. of Some persons, who Stand in Need, the Pope (who is Treasurer of odd Merits) adds part of the Superabundant Satisfaction of departed Saints; and because, neither Nature or Revelation, can enable them to Judge, that all this will Satisfy the offended Justice of God; they have provided, after Death, a little Secondary Hell, where

where Sinners are to be tormented, untill they Satisfy Heaven. But there is no such provision made in Favour of Protestants, who have all along professed, that *the once offering up, of the Body of Jesus, has perfected for ever, all them that are Sanctified*, by the Spirit; and that this same Spirit, or third Person in the Trinity, enlightening the understanding, renewing will, regulating the Appetites, strengthening the Memory, purging the Conscience and *creating us in Christ Jesus to good Works*, (good Endeavours) is the Only rational Assurance we can have in Time, of such Actual perfect Sacrifice, and Attainment to God, for our Personal, and Original Sins also: And that such good Endeavours, are not the Satisfaction itself, but the Evidence, Or sign of it; And that whoever Substitutes such sign, in Room of the Thing represented, ought to be discharged the Vineyard of Christ, as a Person unacquainted with his God and with himself. Whether their Sentiments are just, shall be an after Enquiry. In the mean Time.

If to what you call *good Endeavours*. Faith, and Repentance, you add the Aids of the Spirit, to make Morality effectual; The Question is, what is it you mean by the Aids of the Spirit? Because you seldom

dom mention them, and never explain them; and when you name them, it is with an intelligible Shyness.

Do you mean the general uninterrupted Visitation of *God*, supporting the created Powers of Man and Beast, and every living Thing? If so; you need no more Aids to know your *God*, and your Duty, than the *Ox* to *know his Owner*, and the *Ass* his *Masters Crib*, or a disciplin'd Horse his Conduct, in the Day of Battle; Both of you acting, by Rules of Nature only, or by the Heather *Anima Mundi*, *universal Soul of the World*. Or,

Do you mean, the *Aids* of Revelation? If so: surely you cannot suspect your own Capacity to read it, nor your understanding to take in, at least some parts of it, And tho' there shou'd happen a Deficiency in both; yet you profess, that as much, and no more than you know agreeable to Reason, Nature and the fitness of Things, is a Rule to your Morality: then, are you not sole judge of your own Reason, and Knowledge of Things, and consequently of these Parts of Revelation, and of *those* Constructions upon them, which are agreeable to both; and tho' your share of both Reason, and Knowledge, shou'd happen to be very Poor; yet, you
say

say it is your Rule, which Rule cannot go beyond its Nature, nor the best of Beings, in his Requirements beyond *that*.

Therefore the Aids of Revelation, is a Sound, quite unideal on your Plan; because if your accidental Share of Reason and previous Knowledge of Things, is the only Rule obliging you to Morality here, and obliging *God* to reward you hereafter, it would have remained such Rule, had there been no Revelation at all. Therefore, so far is the Assistance of Revelation, from being necessary to your Happiness, that they seem to endanger it Because additional Knowledge, infers additional Practice; and *that* infers an additional Aptitude, to additional Omission, and Transgression; and that involves, an additional Probability of future Misery: especially considering, that tho' Revelation always Aids your Knowledge, it never does of itself aid your Practice; in this Respect, it is a *dead Letter*, and leaves the Stress of performance, on your own unassisted Powers---Or.

But I must conclude at this Time, beseeching you, in *Bowels of Mercy*, and Kindness, that you would not give me an unwilling Occasion, to crawl humbly to the *Footstool* of *God*, entreating him for his
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Names Glory, that he would not permit *my Soul*, enter into your *Secrets*; or *mine eternal Honour* to be *united* with yours: That he would let me alone, to *mourn in Zion*, for the *Captivity* of my thoughtless Brother; untill he (*God*) wou'd hear; or say, dissolved, come up hither, say no more, *put up neither Cry, nor Prayer* for him, *for I will not hear*: Let us go up no more, to the *Courts of God*, to join our Praises to Heaven; no longer let us join Requests, for kind returning Smiles of *Jesus*: No longer let the Assembly read, the pleasing Union of our *Souls*, no longer let our Language speak, the same *old good* and living Way: No longer let us feed our Flocks, together, on a Summer Day; until the *Antient of Days on a Throne high and lifted up*, will ask the Reason, Why? even so come *Lord Jesus*; come quickly; and let me hear, *what Iniquity*, my fellow Shepherd has found in Thee.

END of the First LETTER.